

SKUNK CABBAGE

Symplocarpus foetidus

Located in wet meadows and swampy woods and thickets throughout the Division. Also known as Skunkweed; Meadow-, Swamp- or Clumpfoot-cabbage; Pole-cat Weed; Polk-weed and Collard.

A cluster of large leaves arise from a thick perennial rootstock. The leaves may be up to 60 cm long and 30 cm wide; thin with very pronounced nerves and without teeth; the leaf-stalk deeply channeled (similar to celery stalks); having a skunk-like odor when crushed. The rounded flower head (spadix) is approximately 3 cm in diameter and enclosed in an erect modified leaf (spathe) similar to *P. virginica* (P.22.01). The spathe which appears before the leaves (February to May) is purple-brown to green and mottled; close to the ground; 6 to 15 cm high and 2 to 8 cm diameter at the base. The spadix enlarges up to 15 cm in diameter as the fruit develop; fruit ripen from August to September.

The large seeds are eaten by ring-necked pheasant, wood duck, ruffed grouse and bobwhite quail.





Spathe

Fruiting Body

